New record of the juvenile blackfish, *Centrolophus niger* (Centrolophidae), from the Aegean Sea (Izmir Bay, Turkey)

by

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RÉSUMÉ. - Nouvelle capture de centrolophes noirs juvéniles, *Centrolophus niger* (Centrolophidae), en mer Égée (baie d'Izmir, Turquie).

Deux centrolopes noirs juvéniles, *Centrolophus niger* (Gmelin, 1789), 78 et 103 mm SL, ont été capturés les 11 et 17 avril 2006 dans un filet de pêche, à 200 m à l'ouest de l'île de Pirnalli en baie d'Izmir. C'est le premier signalement officiel de cette espèce en mer Egée depuis 1969.

Key words. - Centrolophidae - *Centrolophus niger* - MED - Aegean Sea - Izmir Bay - New record.

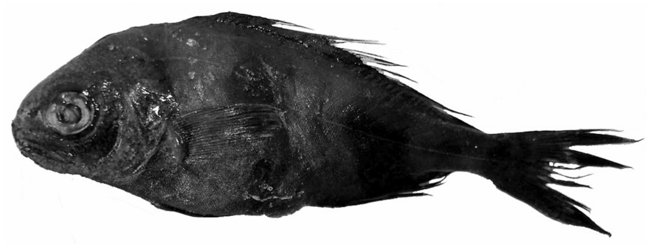

Figure 1. - *Centrolophus niger*, caught off Izmir Bay, Turkey, 78 mm SL. *[*C. niger *capturé dans la baie d'Izmir, Turquie.]*

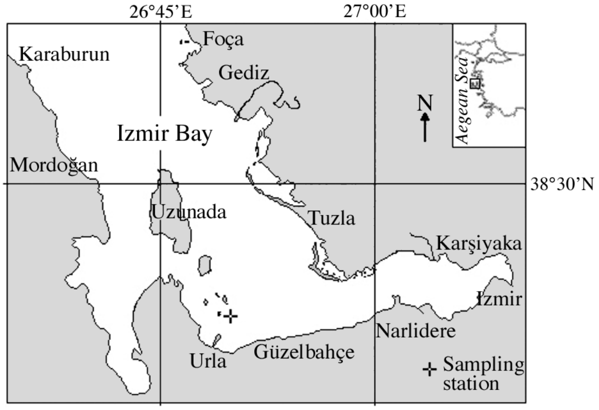

Figure 2. - Map indicating the place of capture of *Centrolophus niger*. *[Carte indiquant le lieu de capture de* C. niger*.]*

On April 11th and 17th, 2006, two specimens of *Centrolophus niger* (Gmelin, 1789) (Fig. 1), 78 and 103 mm in standard lengths (SL), were caught in the east of Pirnalli Island (38°23'N-26°47'E; Izmir Bay, northern Aegean Sea), by a shrimp trammel net (40 mm mesh size). The two specimens lived over a muddy bottom at a depth of 30 m, and were deposited in the fish collection of Ege University, Fisheries Faculty (ESFM-PIS/06-001). Diagnostic characters were as follows: dorsal fin rays 37, anal fin rays 22, pectoral fin rays 19, ventral fin rays 5-5 with thoracic position. Body elongated, small head with pores in the naked skin and small mouth with fine teeth in a single raw in each jaw. Eyes large and bright.

Head length (HL) 30.4-30.1%, pre-dorsal length 28.2-31.1%, pre-anal length 55.1-57.3%, pre-pelvic length 30.8-31.1%, pre-pectoral length 28.2-31.1%, maximum body depth 34.6-31.1%, all of SL. Eye diameter 29.2-22.6%, pre-orbital length 25.0-22.6%, inter-orbital distance 33.3-35.5%, all of HL. Body colour of the fresh specimens was chocolate brown to black and the smaller one has four thick dark vertical bands. The fins are darker than body. All measurements, counts, and colour patterns determined are in accordance with description of Karlovac (1974), Haedrich (1986) and Froese and Pauly (2006).

C. niger has a widespread distribution throughout the temperate waters of the North Atlantic: Nova Scotia and Grand Banks to Massachusetts; Southeast Atlantic and Indian Ocean: South Africa and Australia; Southwest Pacific: New Zealand; Southern Ocean, and also Western Mediterranean and Adriatic Sea (Haedrich, 1986; Froese and Pauly, 2006). In the Mediterranean Sea, especially in Tyrrhenian, Adriatic and Ionian Seas, it was occasionally taken over the continental shelf in bottom trawls (Sartor *et al*., 2001; Politou *et al*., 2003; D'Onghia *et al*., 2003). Dulčić and Lipej (2002) listed it amongst the rare and little-known fishes in the Eastern Adriatic during 1980-2001, and lastly it appeared in April 1990 in Split harbour. In the Aegean Sea, *C. niger* was only mentioned by its name amongst the fishes of Izmir Bay by Geldiay (1969). However, this fish was unknown of the fishermen in the bay. *C. niger* was collected for the second time from the Bay of Izmir and this is the first official record for Aegean Sea. This finding also represents the northeastern distribution of the species within its known range in the Mediterranean. However, the occurrence of these juveniles of this species in Izmir Bay indicates that the Aegean Sea could be a potential spawning area. Since Haedrich (1986) stated that the growth of young specimens in the Mediterranean was rapid, with an increase from 2 to 17 cm in five months, the two specimens collected from northern Aegean Sea, may be younger than 5 months old. Karlovac (1974) noted that the juvenile pelagic stages of *C. niger* had either rarely been found in the Mediterranean or were completely unknown. In the literature, except Karlovac (1974), the juvenile stage of *C. niger* is never mentioned. This occurrence of *C. niger* in the Aegean Sea does not clearly indicate an established population, but it may be the sign of a step-by-step process of migration towards a nursery area.

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